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NEWSLETTER

A Bimonthly Newsletter for Economic Research Service Employees and Colleagues

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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ERS Celebrates 30 Years

April 3 marks the 30th anniversary of the Economic Research Service. To commemorate the occasion, ERS will host an all-day conference in Washington, D.C., on April 4, highlighting ERS's history, mission, and future. Speakers will address topics that include agricultural policy during 1961-91; agricultural economics and public service; the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, ERS, and the land-grant institutions; ERS's role in situation and outlook, international economics, resource economics, and rural development; and the changing ERS work environment. The scope of these sessions will range from ERS's historical roots to visions of ERS's future.

Following the morning sessions, ERS Administrator John Lee will present his annual awards that recognize outstanding accomplishments and products of ERS staff in FY 1990. A luncheon, for all conference participants, will feature former Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman, who reassembled the economic research components of the old Bureau of Agricultural Economics into ERS in 1961.

The conference will enable ERS staff, alumni, retirees, former secretaries of agriculture, former directors and assistant secretaries of economics, former administrators, and other guests to review the role of economics in public service and meet the people who constitute and influence ERS.

For more information or advance tickets to the conference, contact Cecil Davison, Rm. 1034, 1301 New York Ave. NW., Washington, DC 20005-4788 (202-219-0840).

ERS Cosponsors Commodity Costs and Returns Accounting Conference

Over 40 nationally known experts participated in a conference, "Economic Accounting for Commodity Costs and Returns," sponsored by ERS, the American Agricultural Economics Association's Economic Statistics Committee, the Farm Foundation, and USDA's Extension Service. The conference was held in Kansas City, Mo., February 20-21.

Estimating the costs and returns of individual agricultural commodities is a common activity of ERS economists and agricultural economists in land-grant universities. However, accounting practices are not standardized. Since most farms produce more than one commodity, accounting for costs of single commodities is complicated when inputs are shared and because farmers' records are

usually organized for the farm as a whole. In addition, commodity cost and return statements are developed with different end uses in mind. Therefore, appropriate methods of calculation differ with the planned use of the statement. For example, statements developed by land-grant researchers are often forecasts of the next production year's costs and returns and are primarily designed to aid farmers in their planning process. ERS's statements are historical estimates of costs and returns and are often used in policy analysis. The result is a wide variety of approaches being used within the profession.

The conference explored how different uses of cost and return estimates affect different methods of estimation and the preferred estimation methods for similar uses. Although many of the issues are not new, the conference provided a forum for discussion of diverse views. The conference concluded with a session that sought to

establish where consensus exists and controversy remains.

To obtain a copy of the conference proceedings, contact Mary Ahearn (phone 202-219-0807, fax 202-219-0317).

ERS Cosponsors Conference on Europe 1992

ERS and the World Bank recently sponsored a conference on "EC-1992: Implications for World Food and Agricultural Trade," in Washington, D.C. About 160 people attended.

ERS economist David Kelch developed and organized the

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ERS Analysts Working Around the Globe

ERS Analysts Active in Egypt

For the past 6 months, ERS commodity analysts have been working with analysts in Egypt's Ministry of Agriculture to develop a program for situation and outlook analysis. Their efforts have led to the completion of two commodity outlook reports—cotton and rice—and to the initiation of a process of outlook reporting on wheat and citrus.

ERS economist Edwin Young began working with Egyptian analysts in June 1990 to prepare a rice situation and outlook report and to establish procedures for circulating and clearing the report in Egypt. The first rice situation and outlook report was published in September 1990.

Also in September 1990, a team of ERS analysts accompanied Young to Egypt to begin outlook activities for several other commodities. The team included Carolyn Whitton (cotton), Edward Allen (wheat), and Larry van Meir (corn). Viable outlook activities were initiated for wheat and cotton. A search for Egyptian corn analysts is being undertaken prior to initiating a corn outlook program. A second visit by Whitton in December 1990 led to the publication of a cotton situation and outlook report.

ERS's activity is part of the larger U.S. effort to support Egyptian agriculture under Egypt's National Agricultural Research Program. The NARP provides the framework for cooperation between ERS and resident technical advisers who provide day-to-day support and followup on situation and outlook activities.

ERS To Assist Agriculture in Eastern Europe

USDA will be working with Eastern European countries to foster the development of more modern, market-oriented food and agricultural systems. ERS's contribution will be to help develop economic information systems (in Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria) that can provide farmers and policymakers with timely information. ERS analysts will also work with Eastern European analysts to improve their capability to use current information to support analysis of key policy issues and options.

The avenue for ERS assistance to Eastern Europe is funding provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development under the Support for East European Democracy Act. USDA has received \$5 million to support several major activities. Of this, \$2 million has been earmarked for ERS to work on developing economic information systems over the next 2 years.

ERS economists Frederic Surls, Edwin Young, John Dunmore, Nancy Cochrane, and Francis Urban and Larry Sivers (USDA/NASS) will travel to Poland this spring to discuss proposed activities with Polish analysts, evaluate the status of the economic information system, learn Polish priorities for activities, identify analysts to visit Washington this spring for a firsthand view of ERS's economic information system, and finalize the plan for establishing a system in Poland. A subset of the team will travel on to Hungary to make contacts for a subsequent planning team. Trips to Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria are also planned.

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program. The conference brought together a number of leading authorities from the U.S. and Europe, including Wilhelm Henrichsmeyer (University of Bonn), Louis Mahe (National College of Applied Agricultural Sciences, France), Alan Swinbank (University of Reading), Timothy Josling (Stanford University), and Maury Bredahl (University of Missouri).

ERS staff giving presentations included David Kelch ("Harmonization of Plant and Animal Health and Food Safety Standards"), Charles Handy ("Implications of a Single EC Market for the U.S. Food Manufacturing Sector"), James Tobey ("Environmental Considerations"), Robert Koopman and Nancy Cochrane ("Implications for Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R."), Liana Neff ("Trade with Developing Countries"), Howard McDowell ("Implications for U.S. Trade"), Carol Goodloe ("The Pacific Rim"), Mary Madell ("The European Free Trade Association"), Steven Neff ("Milk and Sugar Quotas"), and Terri Raney and Alan Webb ("An Overview of EC Trade"). Papers presented at the conference will be published in a proceeding's volume.

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Administrator's Letter—*Tribute to a Public Servant*

The news was sad but not unexpected. Gene Futrell, long-time distinguished extension livestock economist at Iowa State University, had succumbed to Lou Gehrig's disease. On February 11, 1991, he was laid to rest near the Ames campus where he had spent most of his professional career.



Just over 2 years ago, Pat O'Brien and I invited Gene to spend a sabbatical year with ERS in Washington. Gene was interested but was not sure the university would feel he had earned sabbatical leave. This indicated the modesty of the man who was known and respected internationally and who had never requested sabbatical leave during his career. Suffice it to say, his sabbatical request was approved.

Gene and his wife, Lucy, began their tour in Washington in September 1989. Shortly before leaving Iowa, Gene had experienced some problems with his neck and arms and had begun tests at the University of Iowa Medical Center. He continued undergoing diagnostic tests at the National Institutes of Health and Johns Hopkins University Medical Center while in ERS, and eventually the bad news was confirmed. Characteristically, however, few knew of his health problems and constant pain because he felt he had a job to do and did not wish to distract others from their work.

After Gene returned to Iowa State in June 1990, his condition worsened rapidly. He complained little and continued to meet his university and extension commitments and inspired those around him with his determination. He came to work almost every day until the day he died.

My purpose is not to chronicle Gene Futrell's health history nor his quiet bravery, but to pay tribute to one who epitomized the best in public service and who devoted his life to serving others. Gene was indeed modest, brave, and determined. He was also very competent and productive as a livestock economist and highly respected by his peers, students, superiors, and especially by those in agriculture who benefited from his work. He was honored by Iowa State University with the R.K. Bliss Award, and by his economist colleagues who elected him to the Executive Board of the American Agricultural Economics Association. He believed in the purpose of his work—serving the needs of his agricultural constituents. And among those constituents, he had a large and faithful following.

Gene was more than a good extension economist. He was a warm, selfless, unassuming, and giving human being. He was a loving husband, father, and friend. Gene had all the right stuff to be a hero—and in the eyes of those who knew him, he was.

Much is written these days about the need to attract the best and brightest to public service. Recent improvements in pay, job benefits, and recognition will help. But most young people will be inspired to public service because somewhere along the way they encounter a Gene Futrell—and respect him—and want to be like him.


John Lee

Current Research

ERS Studies Wetland Policy for Agriculture

The Food Security Act of 1985 broke new conservation ground to ensure consistency between farm program objectives and environmental objectives. The so-called "swampbuster" provision (Title XII) paralleled traditional concerns with soil erosion embodied in "sodbuster" provisions by denying farm program benefits to farmers who converted wetlands to cropland. And now, the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 amends the swampbuster provisions and creates a new program to permanently restore former wetlands converted to farmland.

ERS researchers have analyzed swampbuster and other wetland programs affecting agriculture to assess the conservation incentives provided by farm programs and other Federal measures. The analysts have provided information on options open to decisionmakers as wetland policy has evolved, including President Bush's "No Net Loss" of wetlands policy.

Research on wetland conversion began with *Swampbusting: Wetland Conversion and Farm Programs* (AER-551). ERS Economists Ralph Heimlich (219-0422) and Linda Langner showed that 87 percent of wetland conversion had been to agricultural uses and analyzed the contribution of farm program benefits and income tax provisions on the farmer's conversion decision. They concluded that lower commodity prices in the late 1980's would retard additional conversion, but restricting farm program payments and reducing tax incentives for conversion would help preserve public benefits derived from natural wetlands.

Further research by Heimlich, published in the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* and in

proceedings of an American Water Resources Association symposium, "The Swampbuster Provision: An A Priori Evaluation of Effectiveness," showed little correlation between areas receiving high farm program benefits and areas where further conversion of natural wetlands to agriculture were likely. Despite limited effectiveness of the swampbuster sanctions in the late 1980's, prospects for future effectiveness were likely to dim as commodity prices rise, reducing dependence on program benefits at the same time market incentives for conversion increased. This analysis was presented in a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment.

Interactions between wetland, agriculture, and urban land uses were suggested by ERS's study of land-use changes in counties with rapid population growth. Heimlich and Marlow Vesterby's findings were published in proceedings of the Southern Natural Resource Economics Committee (SRIEG-10) and the American Water Resources Association's conference, "Conversion of Wetlands to Urban Uses: Evidence from Southeastern Counties." The study suggested a sequence of land conversion from natural wetland to agricultural use and on to developed urban uses, with agriculture moving into new wetland areas to repeat the sequence. While this sequence could not be confirmed by data available from the single transition period, both wetland-agriculture and agriculture-urban conversions in the same areas were observed.

Wetland issues came to national attention in the Presidential campaign when candidate George Bush announced his goal of "No Net Loss" of remaining wetlands. Proposals for restoring wetlands converted to agricultural production were advanced by the National Wetland Policy Forum and in proposals for the 1990 farm bill. ERS researchers Marc Carey, Ralph Heimlich, and Richard Brazee analyzed the evolution of

agricultural wetland policy and the prospects for a wetland reserve in *A Permanent Wetland Reserve: Analysis of a New Approach to Wetland Protection* (AIB-610). They concluded that a permanent wetland reserve could make an important contribution toward the "No Net Loss" goal by restoring some of the least productive of the 55 million acres of cropland developed from wetlands.

Heimlich and Brazee continue to explore economic dimensions of the proposed "No Net Loss" policy. An AAEA symposium in August 1990 focused on how economists could contribute to further wetland policy development by analyzing the costs and benefits of wetland protection and by helping to design the institutions governing agriculture's use of wetland resources. The symposium papers will be published as an ERS staff report. ERS researchers are now investigating the implementation options for changes in swampbuster provisions and for the new Wetland Reserve Program. Cooperative work is in progress between Heimlich, John Reynolds (University of Florida), and Buddy Dillman (Clemson University) on shifts between wetland, agriculture, and urban uses of land in the Southeast, and with Randall Kramer and Peter Parks (Duke University) to model potential participation in the wetland reserve program.

Personnel Notes

Long to Head OECD Rural Development Program

Richard Long, associate director of ERS's Agriculture and Rural



Economy Division, has been named head of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's newly created

rural development program. He will begin work in Paris in March.

Long's responsibilities will include preparing a report on the economic restructuring taking place in the rural areas of the most developed countries and its causes and consequences. The rural development program will also begin building a base for monitoring rural trends on an internationally comparable basis and will explore the economic and environmental implications of alternative rural development policies.

Concern with rural development is currently high among the most economically developed countries because traditional linkages between rural well-being and agricultural support are being questioned and because of the growing importance of environmental concerns in which the countryside plays a central part. The foreign ministers of member countries have called on OECD to address the economic development of rural areas in a context broader than agricultural policy. The new program follows the design, proposed last June, by the Ad Hoc Working Group on Rural Development, which was chaired by ARED director Kenneth Deavers.

Long joined ERS in 1985 as leader of the State and Local Government Section, and, in 1987, he was named ARED associate

director. During 1980-85, Long was director of the rural research and analysis staff in USDA's Office of Rural Development Policy. In 1984, he was the U.S. delegate to an OECD conference on rural public management.

Long was previously a research associate in the governmental studies program at the Brookings Institution. In 1977, he was named director of research of the U.S. Senate Commission on the Operation of the Senate.

Long has written extensively on Federal rural development policy. Most recently, he coordinated a series of studies on broad rural development strategies—education and training, infrastructure investment, and financial market interventions.

Long has an A.B. in history and political science from Southwest Missouri State University and a Ph.D. in political science and public administration from the University of Missouri. He received an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for outstanding contribution to OECD's rural public management project.

Anderson Is New RTD Section Leader

Margot Anderson is the new leader, Global Resource Policy



Section, Resource Policy Branch, Resources and Technology Division.

Since joining ERS in 1987, Anderson has conducted

research on the resource effects of agricultural policy reform, international technology transfer, comparative advantage in agriculture, and robust measures of variability.

Anderson's work has been published in the *International Economic Review* and the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, as

well as in ERS publications. Anderson has served on the ERS/EO committee and is currently on the ERS library committee.

Anderson has a B.A. in economics from the University of Cincinnati and an M.S. and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from the University of Illinois. She received an ERS Administrator's Special Merit Award for outstanding research.

Swaim Is New ARED Section Leader

Paul Swaim is the new leader, Rural Labor Section, Human



Resources and Industry Branch, Agriculture and Rural Economy Division.

Since joining ERS in 1988, Swaim has conducted

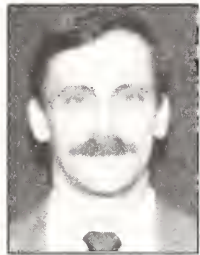
research on rural labor markets. His research on displaced workers has been published in *The Journal of Human Resources*, *Monthly Labor Review*, *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, *Industrial Relations*, and *The Review of Economics and Statistics*. He is coauthor of a forthcoming report on *Education and Employment* as part of ERS's series on *Rural Development Strategies for the 1990's*. Swaim has also served on the editorial board of *Rural Development Perspectives*.

Prior to joining ERS, Swaim was an assistant professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts. During 1987-88, Swaim was at the Bureau of Labor Statistics on a National Science Foundation/American Statistical Association senior research fellowship. He was also the recipient of research grants from the U.S. Department of Labor and the National Commission on Employment Policy.

Swaim has a B.A. in mathematics and economics from Pomona College and a Ph.D. in economics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Bernat Named Section Leader In ARED

Andy Bernat is the new leader, Rural Industry Section, Human Resources and Industry Branch, Agriculture and Rural Economy Division.



Bernat, who joined ERS's Land Ownership Section in 1985,

has conducted research on land ownership and tenure issues. In 1988, Bernat joined ARED's Economic Indicators and Forecasts Section. He has prepared farm income forecasts and has done research on estimating regional impacts of national level policies and the use of input-output models to analyze natural resource policies.

Bernat's work has been published in the *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, the *Southern Journal of Agricultural Economics*, and the *Review of Regional Studies*.

Bernat has a B.A. in geography from Clark University, an M.A. in economics from the University of Virginia, and a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. He received a USDA Certificate of Merit for work on the 1988 Drought Task Force.

Highlights of Staff Activities

Agriculture and Rural Economy Division

Andy Bernat presented a paper, "Applying Input-Output Models to Natural Resource Problems: The Conservation Reserve Program" (coauthored with Tom Johnson, Virginia Tech), at an Economic Society meeting in Williamsburg, Va. • **Robert Collender** presented a paper, "Financial Reform and Agriculture in the Soviet Union," at an American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies meeting in Washington, D.C.

• **Kenneth Deavers** participated in State Rural Development Council meetings in Austin, Tex., Seattle, Wash., and Portland, Oreg.

• **Robert Dubman** spoke on long-term forecasts of net farm income at a Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute meeting in Kansas City, Mo. • **Douglas Duncan** presented a paper, "A GSE Near Miss and Agency Security Yield Spread Response" (coauthored with Michael Singer, Texas A&M University), at a Southern Finance Association conference in Savannah, Ga. • **Merritt Hughes** chaired a session on rural issues and presented a paper, "The Effect of Federal Credit Reform on Rural Areas," at a North American Regional Science Association meeting in Boston, Mass.

• **Anicca Jansen** presented a paper, "Can Sales Tax Revenue Equitably Finance Education: The Tennessee Example," at an Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning conference in Austin, Tex. • **Sara Mazie** spoke on the interrelationship between economic and human resource development at a conference on "Linking the Public and Private Sectors to Support the Rural Family," in Boston, Mass. • **James Mikesell** presented a paper, "The Structure of Capital Markets: A Rural

Perspective," at a meeting of the Western Regional Research Project (WRCC-63), "Rural Credit Markets in the West," in La Jolla, Calif.

• and **Paul Swaim** was interviewed by ABC radio news, PBS radio, and CBS-TV on job displacement in rural areas.

Agriculture and Trade Analysis Division

Terry Disney spoke on the livestock sector of ERS's mathematical programming model at a meeting of the Southern Regional Research Project (S-227), "Economic Analysis of Southern Adjustment to a Dynamic Livestock-Meat Sector," in Atlanta, Ga. • **Brian D'Silva** spoke on the process of data collection and analysis for Sudan's irrigated sector at an Office of International Cooperation and Development meeting in Washington, D.C.

• **Walter Gardiner** and **David Kelch** participated in an NC-194 meeting on "Organization and Performance of World Food Systems: Implications of U.S. Policies," in Washington, D.C.

• **Kenneth Gray** spent 5 weeks in the Soviet Union as a member of the U.S. delegation investigating and offering advice on emerging land legislation and laws that would establish the legal basis for independent family farms • **Barry Krissoff** visited the Planning Institute of Jamaica in Kingston, Jamaica, to discuss agricultural trade and policy and to install an updated version of ERS's SWOPSIM model • **John Parker** spoke on opportunities in Saudi Arabia's agribusiness and trade at a conference on business in the Arabian peninsula, in New York, N.Y. • **Bob Robinson** participated in a meeting of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Committee on Agriculture, in Paris, France

• **Vernon Roningen** traveled to Costa Rica to install ERS's SWOPSIM model at the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation

on Agriculture • **Shahla Shapouri** presented a paper, "The Influence of Dairy Imports on Domestic Marketing Systems, Domestic Dairy Marketing Development, and Implications for Consumer and Producer Welfare" (coauthored with **Stacey Rosen**), at an International Livestock Centre for Africa meeting on dairy marketing in sub-Saharan Africa, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia • **David Stallings** presented a paper, "A Public Choice View of Antidumping and Countervailing Statutes in the United States," at an International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium meeting in San Diego, Calif. • and **Gary Vocke** presented a paper, "International Capital Markets as a Source of Development Funds for Agriculture," at an Allied Social Science Associations meeting in Washington, D.C.

Commodity Economics Division

Peter Buzzanell and **William Moore** presented a poster on U.S. and world sweetener market trends at a high-intensity sweeteners conference in Tucson, Ariz. • **Richard Fallert** presented a paper, "Applicability and Repercussions Related to the Animal Production System in Industrialized Countries" (coauthored with **Shayle Shagam**, **Richard Stillman**, and **Donald Blayney**), at a Biotechnology for Control of Growth and Product Quality in Meat Production Implications and Acceptability symposium in Rockville, Md. • **Fallert** also spoke on ERS's bovine somatotropin (bST) study at a National Institutes of Health Technology Assessment conference on bST, in Bethesda, Md. • **Betsy Frazao** represented ERS at a meeting of the Survey Complementarity Working Group of the Interagency Committee on Nutrition Monitoring in Washington, D.C. • **Lewrene Glaser** participated in a conference on new industrial crops and products, in Riverside, Calif. • **Mack Leath**

presented a paper, "FGIS, ERS, and OSU Grain Quality Research Project," at an Elevator Business Conference in Stillwater, Okla.

• **Lester Myers** chaired a USDA Dairy Promotion Evaluation Committee workshop, in Washington, D.C. • and **Tanya Roberts** presented a paper, "Data Needs to Address Economic Issues in Food Safety" (coauthored with **David Smallwood**), at an Allied Social Science Associations meeting in Washington, D.C.

Resources and Technology Division

Stephen Crutchfield participated in a Great Plains Agricultural Council Water Quality Task Force meeting in Denver, Colo.

• **Crutchfield** also presented a paper, "An Integrated Model of Agricultural Production and Water Quality: Application to Pesticides, Surface Water, and Ground Water" (coauthored with **Richard Brazee**), at a National Pesticides Research Conference in Richmond, Va.

• **George Frisvold** presented a paper, "Endogenous Technological Change in U.S. Agriculture," at a seminar at Rutgers University

• **William Hyde** was invited by the International Rice Research Institute to participate in an external review of the sustainability aspects of its research program in rice culture, in Los Baños, Philippines • **Robert Kellogg** discussed ERS's Delmarva Area Water Quality Study at a meeting of Delmarva Federal and State water quality personnel in Annapolis, Md. • **Betsey Kuhn** presented a paper, "Do Circuit Breakers Moderate Volatility? Evidence from October 1989," at a Chicago Board of Trade research seminar at Vanderbilt University

• **David Letson** spoke on point/trading nonpoint pollution reduction at a Mexican Ministry of Agriculture seminar, in México City, Mex. • **John Reilly** served as a member of an international review of U.S. Department of Energy-funded research on the effects of

climate change conducted by Resources for the Future, in Interlaken, Switzerland • **Reilly** also presented a paper, "Carbon Dioxide Emissions Control and Global Environmental Damages," at a workshop on "Limiting the Greenhouse Effect: Options for Controlling Atmospheric CO₂ Accumulation," in Berlin, Germany • **John Schaub** and **Anthony Grano** (OA) visited a fresh fruit and vegetable terminal market as members of a USDA Food Safety Initiative group considering residue sampling, in Jessup, Md. • **Parveen Setia** discussed ERS's role in the President's Water Quality Initiative at a USDA-sponsored meeting of social scientists in St. Louis, Mo. • **James Tobey** presented a paper, "The Effects of Domestic Environmental Policy on Patterns of Trade," at an International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium meeting in San Diego, Calif. • and **Gene Wunderlich** spoke on the impact of present and proposed property tax reforms on revenue, values, and agriculture at a conference on "Prospects for Appalachia—From Poverty to Prosperity by 2000," in Charleston, W. Va.

ERS Alumni Notes

[We invite ERS alumni to write to us at the address on page 2 about what they or other alumni are doing, where they are living, etc.]

ERS retiree **Kenneth Bachman** died Nov. 28 in Fairfax, Va. • ERS retiree **Gladys Baker** died Jan. 1 in Des Moines, Iowa • and ERS retiree **Austin Fox** died Dec. 17 in Allentown, Pa.

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